

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 007305

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/17/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [SY](#) [LE](#) [FR](#)

SUBJECT: FRENCH RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE ON MEHLIS REPORT: FM
ATTENDANCE LIKELY OCTOBER 31, BUT NOT CONFIRMED

REF: STATE 196400

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) We briefed senior MFA officials on the U.S. demarche to UNSC capitals on the Mehlis report (reftel) October 25, urging the participation of French FM Douste-Blazy at the October 31 UNSC ministerial. French MFA IO A/S-equivalent Jean-Maurice Ripert suggested to visiting IO A/S Kristin Silverberg during an October 25 meeting (septel) that FM Douste-Blazy would likely attend the October 31 ministerial, as long as it was clear that the ministerial could adopt a resolution. On the proposed French-U.S.-UK draft UNSCR, Ripert focused on the need for "justice," unanimity, and the importance of keeping UNSCR's 1559 and 1595 separate. Ripert emphasized that FM Douste-Blazy would offer a more definitive GoF response during an expected telcon with Secretary Rice later that afternoon.

2. (C) In a separate October 25 discussion with poloff, MFA DAS-equivalent for Egypt/Levant Herve Besancenot welcomed news of the U.S. demarche to UNSC capitals and expressed general agreement with reftel points. He observed that the U.S. approaches to Russia and Algeria would be of particular importance. Besancenot noted that FM Douste-Blazy had not yet announced his participation at the October 31 ministerial, though the FM had already confirmed publicly his readiness to attend a ministerial in principle, "at the opportune moment."

3. (C) While the GoF supported the idea of a ministerial vote, Besancenot said there was a potential U.S.-GoF disagreement over what happened immediately after the October 31 ministerial; he asserted that the GoF did not favor having UNSC ministers attend a follow-on October 31 briefing on the Larsen report on 1559 implementation, as some U.S. officials had suggested to the French embassy in Washington. Besancenot reiterated the importance, in the GoF view, of keeping UNSCR's 1595 and 1559 separate and sequenced, while avoiding any impression that the response to the Mehlis report was politically motivated against Syria. He also expressed hope that the U.S. and France could also avoid divergence on the issue of unanimity, with the GoF remaining insistent on the need for a firm UNSCR which would attract unanimous Council support. Besancenot noted that the GoF did not want to repeat the example of UNSCR 1559, which was adopted by the minimum nine "yes" votes.

4. (U) The MFA spokesman, when asked mid-day October 25 about Douste-Blazy's participation in the U.S.-proposed October 31 UNSC ministerial, did not respond directly to the question. The spokesman noted that the FM was open in principle to the idea of a ministerial, but added that no date had been confirmed. The spokesman added that we will see whether October 31 is the "opportune moment" for such a ministerial.

5. (U) A/S Silverberg departed before clearing this cable. Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>
STAPLETON